Books for Children From Birth to Five

Tips for Sharing and Selecting Books for Young Children

Reading aloud is the single most important activity for your child's reading success. The tips below give ideas for how you can best choose and share books with your child at each stage of their development. Nurture a bright beginning with titles we recommend on our booklists!

Tips for Babies | Tips for Toddlers | Tips for Preschoolers
Books for Babies | Books for Toddlers | Books for Preschoolers

Reading with Babies Birth-2 years

Snuggle and bond with baby while sharing books. They will associate reading with good feelings.
Point to objects in the book and name them. Babies store words in their brains long before they can say them.
Make sounds of the animals, trucks, and other things baby sees on the page. Babies love hearing and playing with sounds.
Let your baby practice talking by asking her questions about the book. Imitate and encourage his responses.
Follow your baby's interest. Spend time pouring over pictures your baby likes. If they are tired, put the book down and try another time.
Have fun
top

What Babies Like in Books

- In the first months of life babies enjoy books with high contrast, black and white illustrations.
- Board books with photos of babies or bold, clear pictures of familiar items in baby's world
- Books with rhythm and repetition and sounds
- Touch and feel books, lift-the-flap books, bath-time books, or other toy books
- Babies learn by exploring objects with their mouth -- sometimes early reading looks like chewing!

Reading to Toddlers (Ages 2-3 years)

Let them select and hold the book. If the child is interested in the book, he will be more likely to listen to it.
Ask questions that invite more than a yes or no answer. For example, "What is this thing called?" or "How is this person feeling?"
Talk about the pictures. Sometimes it's best to ignore the words! The better your child is at talking, the stronger she will be at reading.
Read them again. Children like to read stories over and over, because it helps them learn language and how stories work.
Be in the mood. Book sharing should never be forced or unpleasant. Reading together is a wonderful way to soothe and bond with your child.
Have fun!
top

What Toddlers Like in Books

- Simple rhymes
- Stories with familiar items (pets, toys, farms) or familiar routines (bedtime, bath time, meals)
- Books with very few words or with repeating words
- Books with facts about their interests, such as trucks, butterflies, or ballet.

Reading with Preschoolers (ages 4-5 years)

Let your child choose books that interest her. Be sure to read a good balance of factual books and stories.
Let your child practice retelling the story in his own words.
Discuss the pictures, characters and events in the story as you are reading. Check to make sure your child understands new or unusual words in the book. Ask them to practice saying the new word aloud.
Encourage your child to make predictions about what will happen in a story.
Point out letters that appear in the book once in awhile. "There is a 'j.' Your name starts with a 'j,' too." At times, run your finger below the text as you read aloud.
Allow your child time to fill in the words if there is a rhyme or repeated phrase in the book.
Have fun!
top

What Preschoolers Like in Books

- Good stories, simple folktales -- especially funny ones.
- Simple text they can memorize
- Books with playful or rhyming language
- Alphabet books and counting books
- Books about the real world - trucks, dinosaurs, insects, space, dance.

Updated June 03, 2013

- [1]
- [2]
- [3]

Links:
[1] http://mcpl.info/staff-picks/Bright%20Beginnings%20Booklist%3A%20Babies%20%280-23%20months%29
[2] http://mcpl.info/staff-picks/Bright%20Beginnings%20Booklist%3A%20Toddlers%20%282-3%20years%29
[3] http://mcpl.info/staff-picks/Bright%20Beginnings%20Booklist%3A%20Preschoolers%20%284-5%20years%29
[4] http://mcpl.info/printprintpdf/childrens/books-children-birth-five
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